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UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
14th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 10 November 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KHOUINI (Tunisia)

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18 November 1992

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 75: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (A/SPC/47/L.7 and L.8)

(a) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (A/47/253)

(b) SPECIAL REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (A/47/386)

(c) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/47/597 AND A/47/604)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the following documents pertaining, inter alia, to item 75: A/47/89, A/47/335 and A/47/392, which contained letters addressed to the Secretary-General dated 11 February, 16 July and 17 August 1992, respectively; A/47/232 and Corr.1, containing a letter dated 26 May 1992 from the representatives of several Latin American States addressed to the Secretary-General; and A/47/361, which contained a letter dated 29 July 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Finland addressed to the Secretary-General.

2. Mr. ANNAN (Assistant Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations), introducing the report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations (A/47/253), noted that since the Committee had last considered agenda item 75 on the question of peace-keeping operations, four new operations had been established in Cambodia, Yugoslavia and Somalia, respectively, and that a fourth was in the process of being set up in Mozambique. Currently, almost 70 countries were participating in United Nations peace-keeping operations, involving a total of almost 50,000 civilian and military personnel. The expansion of peace-keeping activity had been made possible by the willingness of Member States to contribute the necessary personnel and equipment and to bear the additional costs involved.

3. While he was gratified by the response of Member States to the Organization's requests for contributions in support of expanded peace-keeping operations, more needed to be done to secure the necessary capabilities for new operations and to prevent delays in force deployment caused by the lack of essential equipment. There was, for example, a pressing need for resources for logistics and specialized support functions. In the coming weeks, the Special Committee would be examining the question of stand-by arrangements between the United Nations and Member States as proposed by the Secretary-General in his report "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277-S/24111). Particular attention would be given to the feasibility of coordinating such arrangements to ensure that all the components required for a new operation would be on hand if the need should arise.

4. The high level of United Nations expenditure on peace-keeping operations - in excess of $2.5 billion in 1992 - made it imperative to give full weight to financial constraints in all phases of planning for

peace-keeping operations. As a result, preliminary cost estimates had begun to be included in plans for operations which the Secretary-General submitted to the Security Council. Moreover, financial considerations were also a constant concern in the implementation of long-standing operations. For example, the three operations in the Arab-Israeli theatre - the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) - had reduced their staffs of military and civilian personnel by 10 to 20 per cent. However, thanks to support from contributing Governments, the reductions had been achieved without changing the mandates of the operations or reducing their effectiveness.

5. While important economies in peace-keeping operations had been achieved, payments of assessed contributions to the Organization's peace-keeping accounts and to the regular budget fell far short of the assessed amounts, resulting in a chronic cash crisis. In that connection, the Secretary-General's recommendations concerning the financing of peace-keeping operations in "An Agenda for Peace", and in his report to the Fifth Committee on the financial situation of the Organization (A/C.5/47/13), merited serious consideration.

6. It should also be noted that the Secretariat had directed and administered the expansion of peace-keeping operations without an increase in the number of permanent staff. While as a rule peace-keeping operations required less expenditure once they were established, lately it had been necessary to recall retired staff and to increase the use of contractors for existing operations. For example, his Department had requested Member States to nominate candidates to fill a number of positions in the field, and was awaiting approval by the General Assembly before adding posts for a training adviser and a police adviser.

7. As a result of discussions with the Department of Administration and Management, the division of labour between the two departments in support of peace-keeping operations had been clarified and arrangements for day-to-day cooperation had been improved. The functions of the Field Operations Division were also reviewed in detail, with particular emphasis on support for peace-keeping operations.

8. He drew attention to the two reports of the Secretary-General (A/47/597 and A/47/604) which had been submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/48 concerning the training of peace-keeping personnel. His Department was determined to do its utmost to promote training for peace-keeping by building on the work of a number of Member States in that area.

9. Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria), Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, introducing the reports of the Special Committee, said that recent developments on the international scene had had direct and far-reaching effects on the work of the Special Committee. Greater

(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

coordination in United Nations peace-keeping activities had been achieved as a result of the creation of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, the meeting of the Security Council at the level of Heads of State and Government on peace-keeping and the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace".

10. The Organization's involvement in actual peace-keeping operations had expanded significantly in 1992. New operations had been established in Somalia (United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM)), and in Mozambique (United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ)). In addition, the mandate of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia had been expanded and that of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) had been renewed. The expansion of United Nations peace-keeping operations was evidence of a growing tendency of the world community to rely on the United Nations as the preferred instrument for conflict resolution and maintenance of international peace and security. In addition to the increase in the number of United Nations peace-keeping operations, the scope of the Organization's peace-keeping responsibilities had expanded from monitoring cease-fires and supervising elections to providing humanitarian relief and assistance, as in the case of UNPROFOR and especially UNOSOM.

11. That expansion in peace-keeping responsibilities had highlighted the issue of resources. At present, peace-keeping operations were requiring not only greater numbers of troops, supplies and equipment, but also more effective and more expeditious procedures for mustering forces to serve under United Nations command. In that context, he drew attention to the recommendations in the report to establish a pool of human resources, both civilian and military, that would be specifically earmarked for United Nations service. In order to assist in identifying potential resources, questionnaires had been circulated to Member States.

12. In connection with the question of financing peace-keeping operations, the report had recommended measures to secure additional financial resources and to ensure that contributions were spent in the most cost-effective manner possible. One such measure would be to establish a reserve fund to assist in the initial financing of peace-keeping operations.

13. The Special Committee had also offered suggestions concerning ways to improve the organization and effectiveness of peace-keeping operations, including transferring certain functions of the field operations division to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, strengthening the Military Adviser's office and designating a central body for liaison with Member States. A number of suggestions had also been made regarding standardization of operating procedures and unit types and delegating administrative authority to force commanders and special representatives.

14. Although the section of the report concerning future developments in peace-keeping had been somewhat overtaken by recent events - particularly by the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace" - it nevertheless did

(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

reflect the careful consideration that had been given to a number of possible future directions for peace-keeping, including preventive peace-keeping.

15. The high priority which Member States attached to the subject of peace-keeping operations was reflected in the number of delegations that participated in the Special Committee's meetings, the range of issues covered and the depth of the discussions. In that connection, the adoption of the draft resolution on peace-keeping by consensus was particularly noteworthy.

16. Mr. RICHARDSON (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, noted with satisfaction that changed international circumstances had opened up new opportunities for United Nations peace-keeping operations to play a part in the containment and solution of regional conflicts. While peace-keeping had expanded dramatically during 1992, a number of operations had successfully been brought to a conclusion in recent years, underscoring the principle that peace-keeping operations should neither become permanent fixtures nor be a substitute for the search for a political solution.

17. The European Community and its member States welcomed the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277-S/24111). They hoped that the informal open-ended working group that had been established would ensure close coordination between the General Assembly, its Committees and the Security Council on the different aspects of "An Agenda for Peace". However, the existence of the informal working group should not delay consideration of individual proposals in "An Agenda for Peace" by the relevant committees. The parts of the Secretary-General's report which did not fall naturally within the orbit of the existing General Assembly Committees should be a special focus of the informal working group.

18. The twelve member States of the European Community were pleased to be sponsors of the draft resolution on the protection of peace-keeping personnel proposed by the delegation of Ukraine (A/SPC/47/L.8). They suggested that the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations might hold an inter-sessional meeting early in 1993 to follow up its initial discussion of "An Agenda for Peace". In addition, they hoped that there would be early discussion and action in the Fifth Committee on the proposed reserve fund for peace-keeping start-up costs; continued discussion of Article 50 of the Charter and United Nations cooperation with regional organizations in the Special Committee on the Charter, and thorough discussion of all the legal aspects in the Sixth Committee. They also welcomed the fact that the General Assembly had already made a declaration on fact-finding.

19. The European Community and its member States endorsed the remarks made by the President of the Security Council on 29 October (S/24728) concerning the importance of coordination and contact between the General Assembly and the Security Council on "An Agenda for Peace". They supported his suggestion that Member States should advise the Secretary-General of the forces and

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

capabilities they might be able to make available for peace-keeping at short notice and should enter into direct dialogue on the question with the Secretariat. The European Community and its member States also supported increasing the strength and capability of the military and civilian staff dealing with peace-keeping in the Secretariat, and suggested that the Secretary-General should consider the establishment of an enhanced peace-keeping planning staff and an operations centre. In that connection, Member States should make experienced staff available to the Secretariat for a fixed period of time to help with work on peace-keeping operations.

20. The European Community and its member States wished to pay tribute to those currently serving in peace-keeping operations, often under conditions of considerable danger and hardship. They reiterated their call for all host countries and all parties to a conflict to do everything possible to ensure the safety of United Nations peace-keeping personnel and to respect their international status. They wished to commemorate all those peace-keepers and other United Nations personnel who had given their lives in United Nations peace-keeping operations since 1948. The Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations might consider the possibility of establishing a memorial at United Nations Headquarters to those who had fallen in the service of United Nations peace-keeping operations.

21. The European Community and its member States also wished to stress the increasingly urgent problem of financing peace-keeping operations, especially now that the total annual costs were approaching $3 billion, or considerably more than double the regular United Nations budget. The twelve member States of the EC were contributing one third of the cost of peace-keeping operations financed through assessed contributions. Troop-contributing member States of the Community also accounted for a significant share of the reimbursement owed to troop contributors by the Organization. Those EC member States participating in the new operation in Bosnia would do so, exceptionally, at no cost to the United Nations. The European Community and its member States also took note of the recent report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

22. The European Community and its member States supported early discussion and action on the peace-keeping reserve fund. However, there could be no denying the crucial importance of having all Member States pay their assessed contributions in full and on time. It was unacceptable that nearly two thirds of the membership, including major contributors, were behind in their contributions.

23. Mr. HAAKONSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries, said that they strongly supported the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations and had taken part in them from the outset. At the same time as the peace-keeping role of the United Nations was expanding, and the cost had risen commensurately, it was encouraging to note that a number of operations had been successfully concluded, thus underlining the principle that peace-

(Mr. Haakonsen, Denmark)

keeping was and should always be a temporary measure. The Nordic countries also welcomed the increase in the number of troop-contributing countries.

24. The Nordic countries supported further cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations in the area of peace-keeping, particularly at a time when United Nations resources were stretched to the limit.

25. The Special Committee should continue to hold in-depth discussions on a limited number of topics and arrange open-ended informal consultations on a regular basis for briefings on peace-keeping matters.

26. The Nordic countries strongly supported the approach taken by the Secretary-General in "An Agenda for Peace", several of whose proposals should be implemented without delay, among them measures to close the gap between the increasing and ever more complex demands on the Organization and its present capabilities and resources. Immediate action should also be taken to strengthen the United Nations capability for preventive diplomacy and to establish a reserve fund to secure the financing of the start-up phase of peace-keeping operations. The Nordic countries were prepared to take part in a comprehensive consideration of the ideas and proposals in the Secretary-General's report, with a view to reaching consensus on a series of measures that could be implemented without delay.

27. The Nordic countries hoped that draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.7 could be adopted by consensus. They also welcomed the suggestion of the President of the United States that a special meeting of the Security Council should be held to discuss various practical aspects of peace-keeping operations.

28. The Nordic countries welcomed the creation of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and looked forward to seeing all core activities related to peace-keeping operations, including those of the Field Operations Division, placed in that Department. They also supported the appointment of a civilian police adviser. They expected that the Department would soon designate a focal point for each operation, both for operational and for logistical matters. The establishment of an operations centre that would be manned 24 hours a day could contribute to improved management of the many ongoing operations and facilitate contacts between the Secretariat, troop contributors and other interested parties. The critical question was the planning phase of new peace-keeping operations. The Nordic countries strongly supported the establishment of proper arrangements and procedures for providing additional personnel on a short-term basis in order to ensure that the Secretariat could respond effectively and efficiently to fluctuations in its workload, particularly when new operations were planned and launched.

29. In order to cope with the ever-increasing demands, it was essential that all peace-keeping operations should be put on a sound and secure financial basis through assessed contributions to be paid in full and on time. It was

(Mr. Haakonsen, Denmark)

also important that troop-contributing countries be guaranteed that the United Nations would honour its obligations to make adequate and timely reimbursements to them. The Nordic countries would like to reiterate their strong support for the establishment of a reserve fund to secure the financing of the start-up phase of future peace-keeping operations.

30. The Nordic countries had consistently regarded training and education as important prerequisites for effective peace-keeping, and had stressed that the United Nations should play a more active and coordinating role in that field. They therefore welcomed the establishment of a special focal point for training within the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. They fully supported the Secretary-General's recommendation that the arrangements for training of peace-keeping personnel should be reviewed and improved using the verified capacity of Member States, of non-governmental organizations and the facilities of the Secretariat.

31. The Nordic countries were encouraged by the interest shown by many Member States in the joint Nordic training system. They strongly favoured regional cooperation in the area of training and reiterated their willingness to share their experience with other Member States. They wished to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that in October they had issued their first "Nordic UN Tactical Manual", a copy of which would be distributed to all Permanent Missions in the near future.

32. On behalf of the Nordic countries, he wished to pay a tribute to the personnel serving in the field, and fully supported the draft resolution put forward by Ukraine on that matter (A/SPC/47/L.8).

33. Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand) said that his delegation welcomed the establishment of the open-ended working group of the General Assembly to discuss the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277-S/24111).

34. His delegation concurred with the Secretary-General's observation that the foundation stone of the work of the United Nations was and must remain the State. Respect for sovereignty and integrity of States was vital in any common international undertaking. However, the complex tasks now faced by the Organization required full cooperation from Member States.

35. On the question of preventive diplomacy, his delegation recognized that the ability of the United Nations to perform its tasks effectively depended on the timely availability of accurate information. The Secretary-General's use of fact-finding missions was therefore essential. His delegation would like to see careful consideration given to the Secretary-General's recommendation that United Nations observers should be sent to areas of potential conflict at the request of Member States to prevent the outbreak of hostilities. It would be useful, however, to have clarification regarding the scope of that innovative proposal and the circumstances under which it would be implemented,

(Mr. Pibulsonggram, Thailand)

inasmuch as the idea went beyond the traditional principle of United Nations peace-keeping operations, and might jeopardize the neutrality of the United Nations.

36. The Secretary-General's proposal to establish a United Nations stand-by force deserved serious consideration. Situations were not only foreseeable but had actually occurred in which forces and other personnel resources were needed on very short notice. To meet such a need, Member States might be asked to earmark certain military forces which could be rapidly deployed for peace-keeping operations.

37. Much of the success of all peace-keeping activities depended on prior training of personnel. Thailand therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/47/604, on the feasibility, including costs, of establishing an annual peace-keeping fellowship programme. They hoped such a programme could be put into effect during the current session of the General Assembly.

38. As a troop-contributing country, Thailand was gravely concerned about the growing number of fatalities among peace-keeping and other personnel. His delegation therefore welcomed and supported the draft resolution on the protection of peace-keeping personnel contained in document A/SPC/47/L.8, and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

39. The United Nations peace-keeping operations were too vital to the maintenance of world peace to remain hostage to financial and budgetary restrictions. The key to solving that intractable problem still lay in Member States paying their assessed contributions in full and on time. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's bold and innovative proposal to establish a temporary peace-keeping reserve fund of $50 million as a means of alleviating the burden of the start-up costs of peace-keeping operations. His delegation also welcomed the Secretary-General's other proposals aimed at creating a sound and stable financial basis for future operations, such as a peace endowment fund, and hoped that they would be seriously studied by the appropriate bodies as a matter of urgency.

40. Mr. BHAGAT (India) said that the Secretary-General in his "Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) had placed peace-keeping in its proper context as a distinct stage in the overall maintenance of international peace and security. He indicated that, like the other forms of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building, it had its own particular mechanisms.

41. The tremendous increase in the nature and number of United Nations peace-keeping operations since 1987 had forced them to assume new dimensions. For example, larger police and civilian components were now the norm and increasingly, the United Nations Forces were being enlisted as a neutral arbitrator in resolving international disputes. They had even been asked to mediate between different factions involved in armed conflict within a

(Mr. Bhagat, India)

single country, as in Cambodia or Angola; or to re-establish peace and social order in countries racked by war, as in Somalia. In some instances peace-keeping operations had also been required to provide protection for the delivery of humanitarian relief supplies, as in Somalia or Yugoslavia. In others, they had been mobilized to organize or monitor elections. Those various new dimensions were generating lively discussion about their impact on the classic concept of United Nations peace-keeping. Member States must also re-examine the basic parameters of that activity not only with a view to safeguarding the fundamental principles involved but also to maintaining the credibility, effectiveness and neutrality of the United Nations even while expanding peace-keeping activities.

42. The guiding principles of United Nations peace-keeping operations were, as always, State sovereignty, which meant that no aspect of peace-keeping should become an excuse for intervention in the internal affairs of a country; the consent of the parties involved; and a clear mandate from the Security Council. Those traditional and time-honoured principles must be preserved even while peace-keeping activities charted new territory.

43. The report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations (A/47/253) contained useful conclusions and recommendations on resources and financing and on the organization and effectiveness of peace-keeping operations. It was particularly important for Member States to provide the requested information to the Secretary-General regarding the pool of resources that they could make available to United Nations peace-keeping operations, including military units, military observers, civil police and key staff personnel. Such information would put the operations on a sound footing, particularly in the start-up phase.

44. It was also important to provide a secure financial basis for peace-keeping operations. Since that was a collective responsibility, India supported the proposed establishment of a peace-keeping reserve fund drawing upon assessed contributions. It was also necessary to reimburse the troop-contributing countries for the personnel and resources they provided. The only solution was for all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time.

45. As the eighth largest troop-contributor, India was particularly sensitive to the issue of the safety of United Nations peace-keeping personnel, and felt that the General Assembly should consider the creation of internationally acceptable mechanisms to deal with it.

46. The efficient conduct of peace-keeping operations required the proper training of peace-keeping personnel and the establishment of effective planning and management structures in the Secretariat. Uniform training guidelines were a necessity, and the strength and capability of military and civilian personnel dealing with peace-keeping matters in the Secretariat should be augmented. India looked forward to reviewing the proposals made by

(Mr. Bhagat, India)

the informal working group recently established by the General Assembly to consider the implementation of some of the recommendations in the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace".

47. Mr. CHIARADIA (Argentina), speaking on behalf also of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela, its fellow members of the Rio Group, observed that currently the Rio Group States had more than 2,500 of their nationals serving in either a military or police capacity in nine different peace-keeping operations. At the same time, the region had benefited from two peace-keeping operations in Central America.

48. It was a time when the security and well-being of tens of millions in Africa, Asia, America and Europe and the Middle East depended to a significant extent on the United Nations troops. The outstanding report by the Secretary-General, "An Agenda for Peace", should guide the debate on preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. The Rio Group had submitted pertinent ideas and proposals on those questions (A/47/232) and was prepared to participate in the informal working group that had just been established to review the Secretary-General's report. The Rio Group delegations supported the practical recommendations of the Special Committee for Peace-keeping, which were endorsed in draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.7.

49. Many of the peace-keeping operations that had generated high expectations were now encountering serious difficulties of a political nature caused mainly by the lack of cooperation of some of the parties to conflicts and their failure to honour the commitments they had undertaken or by a shortage of human, material and financial resources. Member States must be in a position to provide military, police and civilian personnel for peace-keeping operations at short notice, and should respond to the Security Council request for the relevant information so that the Secretariat could maintain a database on the availability of personnel and equipment. The much-needed reserve of equipment and supplies required greater financial resources, especially the voluntary contributions of those in a position to make them.

50. Financing had become one of the critical issues in the greatly expanded peace-keeping operations. Although the financing ability of the international community seemed to be reaching its limit, it should not be forgotten that the costs of peace-keeping operations would always be incomparably lower than the cost of war. The financing of peace-keeping operations was a collective but well-differentiated responsibility of Member States, with a special burden falling on the permanent members of the Security Council. Financing arrangements on the basis of Security Council resolution 3101 (XVIII) and subsequent resolutions should be institutionalized. Adequate resources at the start-up phase of peace-keeping operations were also essential, and the establishment of a reserve fund was an interesting possibility.

51. Effective planning, management and coordination of peace-keeping operations and good communication between the Secretariat and

(Mr. Chiaradia, Argentina)

troop-contributing countries were essential. Often, administrative problems hampered the effective or timely deployment of peace-keeping forces and the reimbursement of the troop-contributing countries. The Secretariat bodies responsible for peace-keeping had to be strengthened, and the Secretariat should hold more frequent and regular informal consultations with the contributing States, so as to provide effective supervision and support for each operation from beginning to end.

52. The countries of the Rio Group supported draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.8 on the protection of peace-keeping personnel. At the same time, they expressed their admiration for the dedication and selflessness of the military, police and civilian personnel serving in peace-keeping operations.

53. While peace-keeping operations were temporary by definition, they constituted an extraordinary instrument available to the international community for bringing conflicts to a peaceful resolution.

54. Mr. SUMI (Japan), noting that peace-keeping operations had not only expanded but had become more complex and more costly, said that the guidelines formulated by the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations for increasing their effectiveness would be useful in the effort to modernize their administration. His delegation attached special importance to the elements relating to financing, organization, consultation and safety.

55. With regard to financing, Japan supported the recommendations that financial questions should be studied seriously, particularly at the planning stage, and that Security Council members should be informed of the financial implications of establishing a new operation at the earliest possible stage without infringing upon the authority of the General Assembly.

56. In order to facilitate the financing of peace-keeping operations at the start-up stage, Japan planned to submit to the Fifth Committee a draft resolution aimed at securing additional resources without imposing new financial burdens on Member States.

57. With regard to organization and effectiveness, his delegation believed it was unreasonable to expect the present staff of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, no matter how efficient it might be, to administer all the complicated operations that were now under way. Japan therefore supported the strengthening of the peace-keeping operations staff of the Secretariat, as suggested in "An Agenda for Peace". Japan hoped that timely and fruitful discussions would be held on the proposals put forth by the Secretary-General along the lines mentioned in the statement by the President of the Security Council (S/24728) on the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace".

58. Japan also recognized the importance of holding informal consultations between the Secretariat and contributing countries on the establishment of peace-keeping operations. In view of the complexity of larger-scale

(Mr. Sumi, Japan)

operations, a mechanism should be established to enable countries contributing substantial funds and human resources, as well as countries in the region concerned, to be sufficiently involved in the process.

59. Japan considered the safety of peace-keeping personnel to be a matter of utmost concern. Any attempt to threaten or harm United Nations peace-keeping personnel should be regarded as a grave challenge to the United Nations and, indeed, to the international community as a whole. His delegation therefore supported the draft resolution on the protection of peace-keeping personnel (A/SPC/47/L.8) and urged the Special Committee to address the issue of safety at the earliest possible time.

60. His Government had often expressed the belief that parties to a conflict must themselves make every effort to achieve a peaceful settlement, and must not be permitted to forget or ignore the assistance provided by the international community or to rely indefinitely on peace-keeping operations. In that context, he welcomed discussions among the parties currently involved in disputes and urged them to make every effort to settle their differences, or at least to alleviate tensions arising from those differences.

61. After a year spent studying ways in which Japan might broaden its participation in United Nations peace-keeping operations, his Government had recently enacted an International Peace Cooperation Law under which it had provided some 700 civilian and military personnel for operations in Cambodia. In addition, Japan had provided election monitors to UNAVEM. His Government was pleased to join the ranks of countries contributing personnel to United Nations peace-keeping operations, and intended to cooperate to the maximum degree allowed within the framework of the new law. He expressed his Government's appreciation to those States, particularly the Nordic countries, which had provided training facilities for Japanese peace-keeping personnel.

62. United Nations peace-keeping operations would continue to demand an ever-increasing investment of the Organization's energies and resources. The Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had a crucially important role to play in enhancing the effectiveness of those operations. For its part, Japan was committed to contributing to the strengthening of peace-keeping operations, and in so doing to the maintenance of world peace and security.

63. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that India and Lesotho had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.8.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.

A/SPC /47/ SR.15

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
15th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 11 November 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. KHOUINI	(Tunisia)
later:	Mr. ALSAIDI (Vice-Chairman)	(Yemen)

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AGENDA ITEM 75: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued)

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19 November 1992

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 75: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued) (A/47/253, A/47/386, A/47/597, A/47/604; A/SPC/47/L.7, A/SPC/47/L.8)

1. Mr. SALIMI (Afghanistan) said that the integrated approach of the Secretary-General in his report (A/47/277) was a valuable and timely contribution towards strengthening the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Although he welcomed the positive developments analysed in the report, his delegation was concerned with the spread of nationalistic, religious, social, cultural and linguistic tendencies in the post-cold-war era that could disturb the peace process in many parts of the world. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the amassing of conventional arms on the one hand, and the rise of new racial tensions on the other, had increased the importance of peace-keeping operations and post-conflict peace-building measures.

2. Peace could not be safeguarded and confined by military measures. He therefore wished to emphasize the need for preventive diplomacy. Preventive diplomacy should be broadly defined to encompass political/social, humanitarian and environmental issues if the United Nations was to achieve success in those fields.

3. His delegation fully agreed with the idea expressed in the report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations (A/47/253) to the effect that the formula for apportioning the costs of operations should appropriately reflect the special responsibility of the permanent members of the Security Council and take into account the relatively limited financial capacity of developing countries.

4. His delegation believed that the approach of the Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations, who held that improvements were needed in four areas of peace-keeping - military and police personnel, transfer of civilian personnel from the Secretariat to peace-keeping operations, supply of basic equipment, and transport of that equipment - provided substantial ground for ongoing consultations.

5. Any ad hoc mechanism to be established for consultation among the Security Council, the Secretariat and Member States regarding peace-keeping operations should be based on the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and respect for the right of peoples to self-determination based on the sovereignty and political independence of all nations.

6. Afghanistan attached importance to cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in matters of peace-keeping. The United Nations and its affiliated agencies should concentrate on regional cooperation to

(Mr. Salimi, Afghanistan)

strengthen peace and confidence-building measures in the different regions of the world by applying the different models of regional and international cooperation, South-South cooperation and continuation of North-South dialogue.

7. Mr. WAQANISAU (Fiji) observed that with the expansion of peace-keeping operations there was a need to look again at the current conception of such operations and where necessary modify them to ensure their success. His delegation welcomed the initiative taken by the Security Council earlier in the year and the Secretary-General's comprehensive Agenda for Peace. In his delegation's view, the Secretary-General's recommendation concerning preventive diplomacy, involving confidence-building measures, an early warning system, fact-finding missions, preventive deployment, and in some instances demilitarized zones, might offer a solution to the current financial crisis of peace-keeping. If successful, it could obviate the need to deploy troops and hence save money and lives, but to succeed it would require the fullest cooperation of regional and international organizations.

8. Confidence-building measures were for the most part the responsibility of national Governments, but they must have the will to employ them, as well as the cooperation of regional bodies and non-governmental organizations. Fact-finding missions, while useful, could not succeed unless they could rely on an efficient information and early warning system in the region concerned and the full cooperation of the parties to a conflict. The latter should therefore feel obligated to render every assistance to such a mission.

9. The concept of preventive deployment of United Nations peace-keeping forces and their composition must be thoroughly studied before any operation was implemented. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of States must at all times be respected and the consent of the parties to the conflict obtained wherever possible. In his report, the Secretary-General had raised the possibility of a preventive deployment on only one side of a border at the request of a threatened State, but the United Nations could then be viewed by the other party to the conflict as having forfeited its role as a neutral third party. Peace-keepers could then become targets. Perhaps the presence of major Powers in a preventive deployment force would enhance its deterrent capacity.

10. Conflicts that had remained unresolved despite the application of techniques for peaceful settlement were intractable because the parties to the conflict lacked the political will to seek a peaceful solution. The lack of political will, the reluctance of those with the power to exert influence to bring pressure to bear and the absence of follow-up action by United Nations agencies had been costing the Organization far too much in maintaining peace-keeping missions. Perhaps it was time to end those operations that were not making any headway for lack of cooperation from the parties to the conflict.

(Mr. Waqanisau, Fiji)

11. His delegation understood that peace enforcement was called for when a cease-fire broke down or a revolt broke out or peace-keepers lost the support of one party to a conflict and became targets. The United Nations then had two options, neither of them acceptable: to escalate peace enforcement into a war with the hope of restoring peace or to withdraw without completing the mission. Although the concept had been applied in the Congo crisis in early 1960, his delegation was adamant that if not properly thought out, it would accomplish little aside from tempting the United Nations into places it should avoid and, needless to say, costing more lives. Moreover, in the light of the current financial difficulties of peace-keeping, and the requirement that peace enforcement troops should be thoroughly trained and heavily armed, there could well be difficulties in acquiring troops for such missions in the future.

12. More than 800 United Nations personnel, including 25 Fijian soldiers and police, had been killed since the inception of the first peace-keeping operation and, with the expansion of operations and the increasing vulnerability of United Nations personnel, that number was expected to increase before the turn of the century. Not enough emphasis had been placed in the Agenda for Peace on the safety of United Nations peace-keepers. Fiji strongly supported the proposal by the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations concerning effective international legal instruments to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel and to hold the host States responsible for the use of force against them or for any loss of life. Fiji also strongly supported the draft resolution on the protection of peace-keeping personnel of which it was a co-sponsor.

13. The Secretary-General's report, the Agenda for Peace, had introduced some elements of simplicity and flexibility into the whole concept of peace-keeping operations. However, for peace-keeping to succeed, it needed to be adequately financed, and the solution was for Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time; failure to do so constituted a breach of their obligations under the Charter.

14. Mr. TAY (Singapore) said that the Agenda for Peace had identified the present era as one of regionalism, subnational tribalism, advances in information technology, transnational crises of population growth and environmental decay and nuclear and chemical weapons proliferation. Those emergent forces were modifying the parameters of sovereignty, and the resultant tensions and contradictions were the defining features of the era. The United Nations, torn between high expectations and inadequate resources, was expected to play a greater role in managing the increasing number of disputes and, in one view, had become a dumping ground for intractable conflicts. However, there was also a growing acknowledgement that its peace-keeping role had become fundamental to international security.

15. In the post-cold-war era, peace-keeping operations no longer served to contain local conflicts involving the proxies of the two super-Powers, but aimed at pacifying intra-State factional conflict, as in Yugoslavia, and

(Mr. Tay, Singapore)

inter-ethnic or inter-clan conflicts, as in the Caucasus and Somalia. That change presented opportunities, but also dangers: the United Nations was being overburdened with responsibilities without commensurate resources or manpower, and its credibility could be damaged by a backlash of unfulfilled expectations and general disillusionment. Member States needed to summon the political will to commit adequate resources to United Nations peace-keeping operations.

16. His delegation believed that the Agenda for Peace and the reports of the Special Committee offered some workable ideas, and supported inter alia a peace-keeping reserve fund, a stockpile of peace-keeping equipment, standardized training and peace-keeping fellowship programmes. It further supported consolidation of the United Nations departments dealing with peace-keeping issues, thus establishing a unified command structure.

17. The United Nations needed to establish a reliable and impartial information system before it could devise political solutions or engage in preventive diplomacy. Because fact-finding was the sine qua non of any peace-keeping effort or early warning system, the Organization must have the power to gather objective and timely information regarding any existing dispute.

18. Certain States had voiced reservations about the United Nations adopting a fact-finding role. Singapore, like many smaller States, believed it was necessary to respect national sovereignty, particularly during periods of uncertainty like the present. However, as the Secretary-General had correctly noted in his Agenda for Peace (A/47/277-S/24111), absolute and exclusive sovereignty had become an obsolete concept. It could be necessary for the United Nations to intervene in situations of absolute chaos and total collapse of government in order to provide humanitarian assistance. Elsewhere, the United Nations might have to act quickly to defuse conflicts which threatened the survival of entire regions. In all cases, fact-finding was the Organization's first line of action in defusing or containing crises.

19. Under the United Nations Charter, all States had an obligation to fulfil their financial responsibilities with respect to peace-keeping. However, any effort to reconfigure the basis of contributions for peace-keeping budgets must be based on equitable and just criteria. Scales of assessments should recognize the complex set of factors that determined the extent of a country's influence and its capacity to contribute to peace-keeping operations, whether in terms of money or manpower.

20. With an ever-growing workload and financial burden, there was a need for the United Nations to institute an oversight system for peace-keeping operations which would provide for realistic goal-setting, clear mandates and fixed starting and termination dates based on informed estimates of need.

(Mr. Tay, Singapore)

21. Singapore deplored the growing physical threat to United Nations peace-keepers and other personnel who were performing their duties in remote areas of the world at great risk to their lives. As peace-keeping efforts evolved to include protection for humanitarian assistance efforts, the United Nations would be faced with the new dilemma of working to alleviate suffering while remaining vulnerable to the hostile actions of recalcitrant parties in host countries. Singapore would continue to support an active role for the United Nations in ending conflict and extending humanitarian assistance through deployment of observers, civilian and police personnel and stronger protective measures for United Nations personnel. His delegation therefore fully endorsed resolution A/SPC/47/L.8 on the protection of peace-keeping personnel.

22. Though preventive deployment was a progressive idea, it might be ahead of its time inasmuch as the stationing of preventive forces or observers in a country could increase, rather than reduce, the level of tension in a crisis. In view of the many sensitive issues involved, preventive deployments should be given careful study before being carried out.

23. In the post-cold-war world, sovereignty and international responsibility were two sides of the same coin; thus the very concept of sovereignty was subject to delimitation by international standards. Keeping the peace and extending humanitarian assistance in today's world could require overstepping the bounds of the narrow legal definition of absolute sovereignty. Discussions among Member States regarding the development of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building were leading to new definitions of peacemaking and new practices which would be more responsive to the needs of the post-cold-war world.

24. Mr. Alsaidi (Yemen), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

25. Mr. KA (Senegal) said that the prevailing favourable political climate should motivate the international community to create mechanisms for preventing the outbreak of conflicts and intervening in order to bring about a settlement. By building up the peace-keeping capabilities of the United Nations system, the Organization could strengthen its authority and credibility in the peace-keeping area.

26. To understand the crucial importance of a United Nations presence in areas of conflict, it was sufficient to consider the case of the former Yugoslavia, where, in the face of a vicious policy of ethnic cleansing by one of the parties, the United Nations had provided new hope to the victims of those inhumane practices. The United Nations presence had also been making a difference in Somalia, where every day a civil war was taking the lives of hundreds of innocent victims. Not only was that war the bloodiest and most tragic that Africa had known in recent times, but it also threatened Somalia's very existence as a State. The world community had an obligation to put an end to the situation in Somalia, as future generations would pass judgement on its ability to react effectively in crisis situations.

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

27. In that context, every effort should be made to act on the proposal of the Acting President of OAU to hold an international conference on Somalia as soon as possible in order to bring about a quick end to the Somalian tragedy.

28. As a country which had been participating since 1960 in various United Nations peace-keeping operations in the Congo, Lebanon, the Persian Gulf, Angola, Liberia and Rwanda, Senegal was in a position to recognize the precariousness and sensitivity of the United Nations position in other areas of the world. Whether in the Middle East, Asia, Europe or Africa, the Organization's peace-keeping forces had always made a laudable effort, though there had also been occasions when their presence had been sorely missed. The possibility of deploying United Nations forces in other areas of extreme tension at the present time should be seriously weighed by the Committee, since unfortunately, because of logistic, equipment and personnel problems, the intervention mechanisms of regional organizations were not always an effective substitute. The dramatic situation currently prevailing in Liberia was a clear demonstration.

29. Senegal attached great importance to the recommendations of the Committee concerning peace-keeping, and took particular interest in the recommendation regarding the revised questionnaire circulated by the Secretary-General in 1990, as well as the recommendation on the creation of a reserve fund for financing the start-up phase of peace-keeping operations. The recommendation that host countries should be asked to provide logistic and material support for peace-keeping operations was particularly positive because it would generate greater involvement by host countries and, at the same time, reduce the costs of such support to the United Nations.

30. Effective organization, coordination and flexibility in the planning of peace-keeping operations were crucial prerequisites to success. In that connection, Senegal supported the recommendation to create a liaison service which would permit Member States to obtain information regarding all operational aspects of ongoing and future peace-keeping missions. Moreover, the establishment of a unified and integrated structure within the Department of Peace-keeping Operations would make it possible to clearly demarcate areas of responsibility - an indispensable feature of any effective and economical arrangement for managing peace-keeping operations.

31. Mechanisms for prevention and early warning of conflict should be built into any approach to peace-keeping operations. His Government was pleased to note that the "Agenda for Peace" had addressed the issue of preventive diplomacy, particularly the possibility of invoking Articles 34, 35 and 99 of the Charter in support of preventive action. He welcomed the agenda's emphasis on cooperation between the Organization and regional bodies in activities to promote peace. He also endorsed the two draft resolutions (A/SPC/47/L.7 and A/SPC/47/L.8) and expressed the hope that the Committee would remain faithful to its tradition of high quality work in the peace-keeping field.

32. Mr. KOHOUT (Czechoslovakia) said that his Government considered the Organization's peace-keeping institutions to be an effective tool for the peaceful settlement of regional crises and conflicts.

33. He expressed his Government's full support of the proposals for strengthening the Organization's ability and capacity for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping.

34. Czechoslovakia was of the opinion that new opportunities were emerging for making better use of the United Nations capability to prevent conflicts. His Government endorsed the proposal to establish a pool of resources - including military units, military observers, civilian police and key staff personnel - to ensure that the United Nations could respond flexibly to situations requiring the rapid deployment of peace-keeping forces.

35. The basic prerequisites for the success of United Nations activities in the field of peace-keeping and peacemaking were adequate financial resources and mechanisms by which those resources could be used effectively and meaningfully. For its part, his Government upheld the principle that expenditures relating to peace-keeping operations should be considered the collective responsibility of all Member States. Nevertheless, the possibility of other sources of funding should not be excluded. His Government was therefore considering with favour the proposal to establish a special peace-keeping reserve fund (A/SPC/47/L.7, para. 15).

36. His delegation commended the work of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and believed that by implementing the related proposals in the report of the Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, the Secretariat would be able to significantly expand its capacity to cope with a range of new demanding tasks.

37. Czechoslovakia's confidence in the potential of the United Nations to contribute effectively to the settlement of conflicts had been demonstrated by his Government's participation in the missions of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), the United Nations Guard Contingent in Iraq (UNGCI) and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia. The practical experience gained by Czech soldiers and observers in United Nations peace-keeping missions was being used in the curriculum of the peace-keeping operations training centre which the Government had established in 1990.

38. In conclusion, he endorsed the two draft resolutions and expressed the hope that they would be adopted by consensus.

39. Mr. MALONE (Canada) said that Canada supported the establishment of an operations centre for early warning and day-to-day operations. He noted that the President of the Security Council had also endorsed that proposal in his statement of 29 October (S/24728). His delegation also supported the decision by the President of the General Assembly to establish an informal open-ended working group to coordinate and guide discussions and actions by other United Nations forums in their own areas of responsibility.

40. On the question of the establishment of an annual peace-keeping fellowship programme (A/47/604), he recalled a previous Canadian proposal that the funds accruing from the 1988 Nobel Peace Prize should be allocated to the financing of the fellowships.

41. He welcomed the report of the Secretary-General providing information on training (A/47/597). Recalling that at the forty-sixth session, his delegation had tabled a paper on peace-keeping training conducted in Canada, he said that such training was potentially open to all interested parties. Canada particularly welcomed the appointment of a training officer in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, and trusted that the Department would now have the capacity to develop a long-term strategy on doctrine and methodology with emphasis on training the trainers.

42. His delegation looked forward to proposals from the Secretariat in response to the recommendation made by the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations regarding the need to define logistics doctrine and standard operational procedures (A/47/253, para. 113).

43. In response to the suggestion made by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277-S/24111), Canada was in the process of preparing information on the kind and number of skilled personnel it would be willing to offer the United Nations as the needs of new peace-keeping operations arose. His Government believed that the Security Council should make every effort to involve current and potential troop-contributing States in consultations above the mandates of peace-keeping operations as they were planned and discussed by Council members.

44. His Government attached great importance to the principle of universality in the financing of peace-keeping operations. In that connection, he wished to point out that in its report, the Special Committee had reaffirmed that the financing of peace-keeping operations was the collective responsibility of all Member States (A/47/253, para. 113). None the less, in its operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the United Nations had called on the participating States to pay their own way. Canada and others had made a similar decision in 1964 regarding Cyprus, and delegations were well aware of the burden borne since then by the Organization and the participating States. Canada was a participating State in the expansion of UNPROFOR, but was extremely unhappy about its financial features, and would not accept similar arrangements for peace-keeping financing in the future.

45. Mr. SOH (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation would carefully review the recent statement by the President of the Security Council (S/24728) on the matter of stand-by forces. In view of the need for equipment and logistical supplies for rapid deployment of peace-keeping personnel, his delegation supported the proposal to stockpile the most basic items for the start-up phase of peace-keeping operations.

46. His delegation welcomed the efforts made by UNITAR in the field of training, and looked forward to seeing an extensive training programme for new and potential participants in peace-keeping operations.

47. The Korean delegation supported the Secretary-General's suggestion regarding the augmentation of the strength and capability of military and civilian staff dealing with peace-keeping operations in the Secretariat. In that regard, he stressed the importance of applying the principle of geographical distribution as a means of ensuring balanced representation of different regions.

48. Since the rapid and smooth launching of peace-keeping operations depended primarily on adequate financing at the crucial start-up phase, all assessed contributions must be paid in full and on time. He hoped that the proposal submitted in the Fifth Committee would lead to much-needed progress on that question during the current session. Regarding the current special scale of assessments for peace-keeping operations, he said that his delegation shared the view that until and unless there emerged a consensus for a new format, it would be desirable to maintain the present scale.

49. The concepts of preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building must be viewed together as an integrated approach towards the achievement of global peace and security. His delegation would continue to provide full support to United Nations activities in the field of preventive diplomacy.

50. The operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia and Somalia reflected the willingness of Governments to hand over the task of peace-keeping to the United Nations, but they had also demonstrated the urgent need for changes in the way the United Nations confronted its new and heavy responsibility. The credibility of the United Nations would depend to a considerable extent on the success of its peace-keeping operations.

51. Mr. GAUTAM (Nepal) stressed that any decision the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations might take in connection with the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277-S/24111) should be in harmony with the work of the informal open-ended working group of the General Assembly on agenda item 10, "Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization".

52. His delegation agreed that the strength of the military and civilian staff dealing with peace-keeping operations in the Secretariat had to be

(Mr. Gautam, Nepal)

augmented. Member States should support the Secretary-General's efforts in the restructuring process by offering services of experienced civilian and military staff. His delegation welcomed the statement made by the President of the Security Council in that regard on 29 October (S/24728).

53. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal on the establishment of a pre-positioned stock of basic peace-keeping equipment. As peace-keeping operations were manpower intensive, it also believed that all those who were deployed under the United Nations flag should receive some degree of standardized training. Nepal had been providing national training to personnel assigned for peace-keeping duties, and had designed a flexible manual for that purpose. The fellowship programme envisaged in document A/47/604 could form the nucleus of a standard national training programme for peace-keeping personnel.

54. His delegation agreed that the cost of peace-keeping operations should be regarded as a collective responsibility. As a matter of principle, however, he would like to underscore the need to institutionalize the special assessment scale in order to give the required stability and predictability to peace-keeping finances. His delegation endorsed the opinion of the Japanese delegation on the financial requirements of major operations at the start-up stage. Likewise, it endorsed the Japanese proposal for the establishment of a mechanism for consultations among permanent members of the Security Council, countries providing large contingents, the major sources of financial resources and the countries of the region concerned. He supported the proposal of the Secretary-General for the immediate establishment of a revolving peace-keeping reserve fund. In the final analysis, it was not enough for Member States to express support for peace-keeping operations. The best way to express support was payment of all assessed contributions in full and on time.

55. Changes in the international situation made it necessary to take a serious look at the Secretary-General's proposals for possible uses of peace-keeping operations in preventive diplomacy, and enhanced the prospects for making effective use of the Charter provisions for pacific settlement of disputes, including those under Chapter VIII.

56. His delegation fully shared the concerns of the Secretary-General on the safety of personnel, and supported his call for the Security Council to consider what action should be taken towards those who placed the lives of United Nations personnel in jeopardy. His delegation was therefore a sponsor of the draft resolution on protection of peace-keeping personnel (A/SPC/47/L.8).

57. The CHAIRMAN announced that El Salvador and Luxembourg had become sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.8.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.